



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009

The Royal Court Hotel Coventry

1 The National Standard was paraded into the meeting by Mike Weller, the Union Flag by Debbie Lots and accepted by the National Chairman Mr. Allyn Rees

2 The Homage was read by the National Chairman

3 National Executive Members Present

Chairman Mr Allyn Rees; Vice-Chairman Mr. Fred Burden MBE; Secretary Mr Ted Williams; Membership Secretary Mr. John McAulay; Treasurer Mr. Grahame Bamford; Webmaster Mrs Annie Burden; Committee Members: Mr. Brian Roche; Mr. Jack Spackman; Mr. Malcolm White.

4 Chairman welcomed everyone to the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the NMBVA. "If you wish you can remove jackets to make yourselves more comfortable."

5 Apologies

6 Geoff Parks, Members of the Northern Ireland Branch Mid Ulster Branch and the German Branch

7 Acceptance of the 2008 AGM minutes

8 Matters Arising Chairman: "I shall go through the minutes page by page. Page item 11 Cenotaph Co-ordinator Les Paddon, unfortunately Les who has been the cenotaph co-ordinator for many years has stood down due to ill health. He was invited to the delegates meeting and presented with a certificate of merit for his services to the association. Mr Don Mott has now taken over and we are delighted he has done so"

Item 13a Litigation. "The NEC decided we could not let this go on and on and paying solicitors fees on a regular bases and getting no where. Therefore we have decided to pay the cost of all those who had action taken against them, we believe this to be a moral, if not legal commitment."

Page 4 St Paul's Memorial fund. "I can report that this is now back in house, see Treasurers report."

Page 5 Item B Branch Delegates meeting. "This is a good idea, it is better to have two members travelling together, this will come up later."

9 Honorary President Mr Frank Rhodes

I apologies, but a lot of members comments, were lost due to the non-use of microphone

“Comrades and Friends it has been a great pleasure and privilege to have served as president for the past year. If it is your wish I will be pleased to continue in post. It is always great to see old faces - mostly with a smile on their faces. As the years roll by our numbers will fall, but those who can, will continue to gather to celebrate the meaning of the wonderful word COMRADESHIP.

I hope you all have a good AGM this time, I regret I am only here for the day due to circumstances outside my control

I hope you will continue to support those you elect in office in our Association. Being a member of the NEC is often a thankless task, and a great deal of work goes on just to keep the association shipshape and gaining

Again, I wish you well today and for the (Hopefully) many years ahead. Thank you all”

10 National Chairman’s Report: “I should like to inform you, reference the litigation, we spoke of earlier, Frank was also one of those caught up in the litigation, and spent over a thousand pounds, but has chosen not to claim, against the association, this amount to a donation to the association For this we thank you.

Thanks to the NEC for their support, particularly the Treasurer Grahame Bamford. He not only keeps the book straight, on occasions he also keeps me straight. Grahame is also responsible for organising the Hotel for the AGM, at the Gala Dinner tonight, which is a lot of hard time consuming work, we thank you Grahame.

I thank George Tullis who has been the National Secretary for a number of years, unfortunately, he had to resign due to ill health and I thank Ted for taking over in mid stream.

We have held a Delegates meeting to help to maintain the running of the association and an NEC meeting. From these meetings there will be a need to suggest to you amendments to the constitution.

We have supported the Gurkha’s.

We had a branch in Ireland, but due to a number of factors, plus distance members have to travel, we now have two, the Northern Ireland Branch and The Mid Ulster Branch.

The German Branch is moving on nicely, we did have a problem with membership; however this has now been resolved.

The St. Paul’s fund, now renamed the Memorial fund, is now in house and stands at £4,461.

The Malaysian Palm Oil Association Memorial Project, we have made a donation of £250.

Armed Forces Day, we take part in this celebration throughout the country. The National Event in 2010 will be at Cardiff on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Malaya LEP’s: When the British were in Malay, Singapore etc they employed a lot of people from the local community. They were known as LEP’s “Local Enlisted Personnel. They were not in the Malaya Army, but the Royal Navy, British Army, and the Royal Air Force. When the British departed they were made redundant and cast adrift. They are now in their 60s, 70s 80s. There is now an association fighting for their welfare and I have brought their plight to the notice of a number of MPs and the Minister of Defence.

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Les Padden has stood down as Cenotaph Co-ordinator. I spoke to him a few days ago, and he sends you all his regards

It will be a bit of a strange dinner this year. I had an E-Mail from Sir Garry our Patron. Please find copy of Sir Garry's E-Mail attached

We also had a call from the Malaysia High Commission that our Guest of Honour Brigadier M. Tairi Alwi, would also be unable to make it due to a visit from the Malay Prime Minister

As you already know, the Honorary President is also unable to attend; therefore we had a meeting of the NEC last night and decided to do away with the top table.

We are here to do the business. But also to enjoy ourselves, Work at it"

- 11 Vice Chairman's Report: I have had many telephone calls, because I wear many hats.
- 12 Secretary Report: I have taken over from George at very short notice with very little information to go on, and looking for support from the Branch Secretaries, I wrote to all Branch Secretaries seeking information regarding Branch Standards etc informing them of our intended National magazine, giving Bruce's address, therefore I was more than disappointed only to receive four replies. Communication is a two way Street.
- 13 Membership Secretary Report: John gave a very detailed report. Basically we have 2936 Ordinary Members; 182 Associate Members; 14 Honorary Members. Note John produced a lot of figures, I believe I have got the right.

John: "However we have only received payment for 1747 members" he explained. He believes that in many cases members have paid, but Branches have not yet forwarded these payments to the National Treasurer. Would Branch Secretaries keep John up to date on membership. John also went over the Manchester Branch, distribution of members. We have a coordinator for Post South and north, we are looking for a coordinator for overseas members (91)

Mike Weller: "I pay my subs every year, how do I know that National has received it?" In short you don't unless you contact Grahame.

One Member (No Name given from Leeds Branch) asked on behalf of his membership, "What are members getting for their £4?"

Chairman: "It does take money to run an association, keep communications produce minutes hold meetings etc, memorials to look after and you will hear later on we are trying to produce a national magazine."

- 14 Treasurers Report Mr Grahame Bamford: "You all have got copies of the account, I hope you have had time to read and digest them?" Grahame went through the accounts.

"For the first time since I have been treasurer, we have had a loss on the year of approximately £3,400. If you look down the expenditure column its quite easy to see where it went. On the long running Litigation problems."

"The only real comment I have to make is on an analysis of last years subscriptions, 53% non-payments, this is equivalent of 1,300 members. I am not convinced that 1300 members have not paid. I think we may have the data base wrong, i.e. members have dropped out, or even passed away,

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without the Branch Secretaries informing us. In some cases, members may have paid and the Branch Secretaries have inadvertently forgotten to sent the payments on. Remember if a member does not pay, then he/she is no longer a member of the association.”

“Just to answer Dennis’s question, we have four pages of figures. The donation of £250 to Malaysian Palm Oil Ass, for the memorial project, although we have a memorial fund, which is for the upkeep of memorials, not new ones.”

Mike Weller: “Betty and I pay our subs, with a donation, where have our subs gone Grahame?” “I shall have to make a check, but certainly this year your name or Betty’s is not on the list.” Mike questioned the cost of the AGM. Grahame said he thought we were getting very good value. He pointed out that we get use of the room free, the hotel band free. When we went to Nottingham the band cost £600 we had also had to pay £75 a day for use of the rooms.

Mrs Pemberton: “I should like to say thanks to Grahame. I go to a number of functions, I think the NMBVA is by far the best value and enjoyment, (A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE).

Chairman: “When you look at the expenditure of NEC members, I can assure you that although we get certain expenses paid. IT COST MEMBERS MONEY TO BE ON THE NEC.”

Chairman: “I should like to congratulate and thank Grahame for a job well done. It’s not an easy job and its very time consuming Thank you Grahame.”

15 Postal South: “My name is Brian Roche. I am a member of the NEC and also Postal coordinator for the south for 3 years. I have 370 members and the key to our success is “communications. I keep in regular contact with members by E-mail, phone and send out a short newsletter once a year. I also send them a reminder of renewal of their subscriptions.”

Chairman: “Thank you Brian the Postal members are of great help to the association, especially financially.”

15 Postal North Malcolm White: “I have only recently taken over Postal North, which sadly has been neglected for a number of years. With the help of Brian we sent out approximately 450 letters and Newsletters with confirmation of details slips, 90 of these were overseas members. Out of the remainder, so far we have had about 50% replies. Sadly some have passed away, but replies are still trickling in. They complain that they have had no contact for a number year and are very pleased to be back in the fold. They have now got a reference for contact.

16 Bruce Hunt National Magazine Editor: He is a member of the Bridgend Branch he lives in Portsmouth and travel to Bridgend for meetings. Bruce presented the NEC with a shield.

“The magazine will be sixteen pages back to back, I am now getting material through the post and also photos which will enhance the presentation. Please send any stories you have.”

Chairman: “The magazine will only be as good as the material you send.”

Grahame: “I am a bit concerned that I have paid out money towards the magazine, but have nothing back. The Chairman did give a quote, but what for?”

Brian: “Bruce I don’t know what you experience is.” He then explained the procedure for setting a magazine etc.

Bruce: “I got quotes, did not realise the NEC wanted them all.” He went through a number of quotes.”

Malcolm White suggested that we would waste a lot of time at this meeting. "I suggest that Bruce attends the next NEC meeting."

17 National Liaison Officer Report Ron Blain: Please see copy of Ron' report attached

John,: "ANZAC Day Australia, what location are we taking about?" "Adelaide"

18 Arboretum John McAulay Ted Williams. John described the memorial to every one, and a lot of the problems are to the fact that the memorial is laid flat on the ground, and we have had numerous complaints from members. "It has been painted a number of times with weather proof paint. This has been unsuccessful, because it is flat on the ground; chemicals from the soil are eating away at the side; also the local rabbit population use it as a toilet. When it rains a huge puddle from in front of the memorial prevent people from getting there. However Ted, and I saw the management of the site and we have been promised better drainage will be put in, once the present project near the site as been completed. Nevertheless both Ted and I agree that the present monument will take a lot on maintenance and never meet members' aspirations. Therefore we should set up a small committee with the power to act."

Ted: "I went with John and believe the concept was bad in the beginning. We should blow this one up, design another upright monument, however this will be very expensive, and we can't afford it.

John Cossley: "If we went to this expense who would look after it when we have all gone?"

Ted: "We have spoken to the Management of the Arboretum and they will take over the maintenance.

After a lengthy debate a vote was taken: 1 Against; 10 Abstentions; 87 for.

Chairman: "I believe we have consent of opinion that we need to set up a small committee and to look at a way to raising finance. We have a break and you can talk among yourselves, and make decisions when we came back.

- Set up a small committee Under the Chairman of Fred Burden MBE Members Major David Hancock, Geoff Parkes Mr Dingle Ted Williams.
- Finance: If necessary we will request that each member is asked to donate a minimum of £1 each

## **PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1 Change to the Constitution

We have two problems: for social reason a member may wish to be a member of two Branches, plus members have been expelled on the whim of one person. To overcome this problem:

Proposed by John Mclay seconded by Mr. C. E Usher:

Section 8 subsection F: a member may only be a voting member on one branch at any one time.

Section 8 subsection G: A member may be refused membership of a Branch, but not the Association, by a majority vote at a branch meeting where not less than 15 ordinary members are present; where this is not possible; a majority of the branch executive.

Section 8 subsection H: A member may be expelled from a Branch, but not the association, by a two third majority at a branch meeting where not less than 15 ordinary members are present; where not possible; by a unanimous vote of the branch executive

Proposed by Mr E Pemberton seconded By Michael Smith:

In future all members superscription will be paid on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, commencing in 2010. This will be of immense value to the association as all Branches and NEC will know what their annual income from members subscriptions are in October.

It would improve the organisation accounting system and make life easier for the National Treasurer.

Brian Roche: "This would not be possible for postal members who at present pay on the anniversary of their joining. Plus the fact standing orders are paid at a certain time every year."

Member from Nottingham: "Most organisation have a set date, and it works, lets go forward not back."

Graham: "May I make an amendment to the proposal and make it the 1<sup>st</sup> September. This will give the Nation Treasurer time to prepare the accounts for the AGM."

John: "I agree, the present system is a mess."

Malcolm: "Why don't we introduce it in two stages. Branches 2010, Postal 2011."

Grahame: "May I suggest that new members on joining pay as follows: if they Join between September – November the full £4, December – February £3, March - May £2, Aug £1."

Chairman: "I believe the proposal is sound, we have a consensus of opinion."

Annual date 1<sup>st</sup> September  
Branches start 2010  
Postal 2011  
New Members Nil with the first year of joining

**Carried unanimous**

### **Proposed My John McAulay seconded By E. J. Williams** **Proposed amendments to the Constitution**

#### Para 4 subsection F: Existing

Associate membership is open to all those who have served in HM Forces anywhere; the spouses, widows, children and grandchildren of those who are ordinary members or would qualified for ordinary membership and all civilians who were held captive during the Japanese occupation of qualifying countries.

#### Proposed amendment to Para 4 subsection F.

Associate membership is open to all those who served in HM. Forces anywhere; the family and immediate relatives of those who are ordinary members or would qualify for ordinary membership and all civilians who were held captive during the occupation of the qualifying countries.

#### Change Para 4 subsection H to

The above membership qualification is not exhaustive; all applications will be considered on their merits. It is not the policy of the Association to be totally exclusive.

The present subsection H will now become subsection I subsection I will now be subsection J. and subsection J to be subsection K.

This will also open membership to immediate family

This was discussed at length, and Agreed

The propels was carried by a show of hands.

Chairman, before I should like to thank Annie for her work on the Web Page

### Any Other Business

1a R. F Hallam: Rosette Campaign: Please see a very well written report attached.

Unanimous support from all members

2b PJM, A number of members complained, they are not getting answers to their letters. Fred Burden MBE replied to that there has been a problem with the supply of the PJM. He reads and replies to all correspondence, either by phone or in writing. He suggested those with problems see him at the end of the meeting.

3c AGM 2010: Brian Roche: "Organising the AGM/ Reunion, Dinner is a lot of hard work and time consuming which has been undertaken by Grahame Bamford. Grahame is no longer prepared to do it; his work load as the treasurer is enormous, without the AGM. With that n mind, I happened to get hold of a booking application for the Changi association who are holding their AGM/Reunion here next year. They are a similar association with the same problems as us. They use an outside company. I have contacted this company "Isle of Wight Tours Ltd." The prices are similar to those we pay now; they will send a mail shot to each member; lay on an excursion for the ladies. In short do what we want them to do. They will have a member of staff here at the weekend; arrange a welcome and take on any complaints. All I need is your approval to go ahead."

This was discussed at length. It was agreed that we had little choice. This appears to be a good deal. Brian was requested to go ahead.

### *Election of Executive and Non Executive Officers 2009-210*

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|                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| National Chairman             | Mr Allyn Rees            |
| National Vice Chairman        | Mr Fred Burden MBE       |
| Secretary                     | Me Edward Williams (Ted) |
| Ass. Secretary                | Mr. Mansel Lewis         |
| Treasurer                     | Mr Grahame Bamford       |
| Membership Secretary          | Mr John McAulay          |
| Webmaster & Regalia Officer   | Mrs Annie Burden         |
| Committee Member              | Mr Brian Roche           |
| Committee Member              | Mr. M White              |
| Committee Member              | Mr Jack Spackman         |
| <u>Non Executive</u>          |                          |
| Honorary President            | Mr Frank Rhodes          |
| International Liaison Officer | Mr Ron Blain             |
| Cenotaph Organist or          | Mr. Don Nott             |

The chairman thanked members for electing him, but emphasised this would be his last year in office

#### Recovery of Standard and Union Flag

The Chairman thanked all members for attending and their demeanour throughout the meeting, and he was looking forward to the Reunion Dinner tonight.